

Proposed Claim Amendments for US 10/088,683

To: Examiner Robert Scheibel

From: Eric Grabski (Reg. 51,749)

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1. **(Currently Amended)** A method for setting up and/or clearing a communications link via communication devices of at least a first and a second type in a system including a control network and a separate data transport network based on the same physical network, the method comprising:

using the control network to signal the first and second types of communication devices to control the setting up and/or clearing of communications links between the first and second types of communication devices, wherein the control signals are communicated via a central device of the control network; **and**

using at least one decentralized switching device of the data transport network to provide data communication paths between the first and second types of communication devices, such that the data communications between the first and second types of communication devices are not routed through the central device of the control network; **and**

setting up and/or clearing at least one of the communications links from a communications terminal configured for connection via time slots in a time slot multiplexing connection, the connection being set up by producing, in the central device of the control network, at least one time slot control information item used for setting up connections in the data transport network, and one time slot is reserved for transferring communication data between communication devices of different types.

2. **(Previously presented)** The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the connection is set up and/or cleared via a central device for the second type.

3. **(Previously presented)** The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the connection is set up via a transport network for the first type.

4. **(Previously presented)** The method as claimed in claim 1, in which the central device controls a decentralized switching device.

5. **(Previously presented)** The method as claimed in claim 1, in which communications data for the communications link is converted in the region of a decentralized switching device for communication devices of different types.

6. **Cancelled.**

7. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 6, in which the time slot control information is linked to a transport-network-specific information item and is transmitted to a decentralized device.

8. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, in which an asynchronous transmission method is used for transmission via the communications link.

9. **(Currently Amended)** A system for setting up and/or clearing a communications link via communication devices of at least a first and a second type, comprising:

a transport network to provide the communications link between a first communication device of a first type and a second communication device of a second type;

a control network to control the setting up and/or clearing of the communications link between the first and second communication devices;

a switching matrix to provide the communications link between the first and second communication devices; and

means for controlling the setting up and/or clearing of connections in the transport network through the control network, the means being operatively connected to the switching matrix, and connection control information for the switching matrix being supplied to them as part of a control information item;

wherein the switching matrix is decentralized from a central device of the control network in order to provide a backup connection between the first and second communication devices independent of the central device of the control network; **and**

wherein at least one of the communications links is set up and/or cleared from a communications terminal configured for connection via time slots in a time slot multiplexing connection, the connection being set up by producing, in a central device of the control network, at least one time slot control information item used for setting up connections in the transport network, and one time slot is reserved for transferring communication data between communication devices of different types.

10. (Previously presented) The system as claimed in claim 9, in which the transport network has a different topology than the control network.

11. (Previously presented) The system as claimed in claim 9, in which the transport network has at least one decentralized device for connection of a communications terminal, and has a switching device in the region of the decentralized device which provides the communications link in the transport network.

12. (Previously presented) The system as claimed in claim 9, in which the communications device of the second type has at least one peripheral device with at least one device for connection of a communications terminal, and has a switching device to provide the communications link in the transport network.

13. (Previously presented) The system as claimed in claim 9, which has a conversion apparatus for conversion of communication data, which conversion apparatus converts communication data in at least one data flow direction as a function of the type of communication device, with at least data types for a communication device of the first type and for a communication device of the second type.

14. (Previously presented) The system as claimed in claim 13, in which the conversion apparatus is configured in the data flow in the immediate vicinity of a decentralized switching device.

15. (Previously presented) The system as claimed in claim 9, which has central means for providing at least one connection-related service feature, the means being operatively connected to the central device.

16. (Previously presented) The system as claimed in claim 9, which is in the form of a private branch exchange and has at least one decentralized device for connection of communications terminals.

17. (Previously presented) The system as claimed in claim 9, which has a control device to provide the communications link in the region of the decentralized device, if a central control device is not available.